been reported by the Office of Director General of Foreign Trade, who are the export licensing authority, that the Government of Maharashtra has been allotted a quota of 1.60 lakh MTs of Non-Fair Average Quality Jowar and 3.30 lakh MTs of Fair Average Quality Jowar and that no request for export of 7 lakh tonnes of hybrid jowar has been received from the State Govt.

Refusal to Release Marine Oil Subsidy of MPEDA

1881. SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that MPEDA had turned down some fishing units for release of marine oil subsidy in Visakhapatnam ;

(b) if so, the reasons thereof ; and

(c) steps being taken to make the scheme flexible ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE, CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED) : (a) No, Sir. No eligible deep sea fishing operator who has applied for assistance under High Speed Diesel (HSD) oil price reimbursement scheme has been deprived of it by MPEDA.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The scheme is functioning smoothly. However, any suggestion to streamline the procedure within the parameters of the scheme shall be considered.

Import of Consumer products

1882. SHRI ANANTRAY DEVSHANKAR DAVE : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) the names of foreign countries and the total quantity of consumer products like toothpaste, face cream and other goods which were imported during the last two years ;

(b) the foreign exchange incurred on the Import of these items during the above period ; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken to produce these items in the country and to save foreign exchange ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED) : (a) and (b) Under the current EXIM Policy, consumer products, like toothpaste, face cream etc. are covered by the negative list of imports and as such these are not allowed to be imported. Toothpaste and face cream have not been imported during the last two years. viz. 1991-92 and 1992 93. Import data of other consumer products which contains a very long list of items is published in the Monthly Statistics of the Foreign Trade of India, Vol. II brought out by DGCI&S, Calcutta which is available in the Parliament Library.

(c) The liberalised policy initiatives being pursued by the Govt. are expected to boost up the production of consumer items resulting in saving of foreign exchange.

GATT Secretariat urging for market Access to India

1883. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) Secretarit has urged India's trading partners to provide more market access for stable trading conditions for the latter to persist with its trade reforms ;

(b) if so, whether any suggestions have been submitted in this regard ;

(c) whether Government have examined these suggestions ; and

(d) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : (a) to (d) The report prepared by the GATT Secretariat for India's first Trade Policy

review contained an observation that "It is therefore important that India's trading partners assume their responsibility for assisting India's autonomous liberalisation process for ensuring market access and stable trading conditions for its developing export base". No specific suggestions were, however, submitted by the Secretariat in this regard.

Task Force on Leather Exports

1884. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have constituted a task Force to scrutinise important recommendations made by the Expert Committee on export of leather and leather products ;

(b) if so, the main functions of the Task Force :

(c) whether it is fact that export of leather and leather products has increased over the year ;

(d) if so, the extent to which the leather exports have increased in 1992-93 and during 1993-94 ; and

(e) whether the formation of this task force has increased leather exports ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : (a) and (b) Yes Sir. A Task Force on Leather and Leather Products has been set up to analyse the factors which hinder the accelerated growth of exports in the Leather Sector and to monitor the achievements periodically with reference to the targets.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Leather & Leather Goods exports increased from Rs. 3076.24 crores in 1991-92 to 3692.48 crores in 1992-93 registering a growth of 20.03%. Export of Leather & Leather Products during the current year i.e., for the period April—November 1993 (latest available) amounted to Rs. 2648 crores as compared to Rs. 2405.03 crores during the corresponding period of previous year. The increase is 10.10%.

(SOURCE : D G C I & S)

(e) The Task Force has been formed recently and it is too early to analyse its import on leather exports.

Financial problems faced by small growers

1885. SHRIMATI CHANDRIKA ABHINANDAN JAIN : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that a number of small tea growers are facing acute financial problems due to input-cost ;

(b) if so, the action being taken by Government in this regard ;

(c) whether there is any proposal under Governments consideration to provide financial assistance to small tea growers in this budget ;

(d) if so, what are the details thereof ; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : (a) There has been overall increase in the cost of inputs between 1991-92 and 1992-93.

(b) The following steps have been initiated to help the growers in this regard :—

(i) Revised unit costs for various items connected with tea plantation development have been announced by the National Bank for Agricultural and Rural Development and the revised costs have been given effect from 1-4-92 by all Commercial Banks and Land Development Banks.

(ii) Areawise standard unit cost of production have been revised by the sub-committee constituted by the Reserve Bank's Standing Committee on finance. The revised costs would serve as an indicator to the short term working capital limit to be determined by the commercial banks for the year 1994-95.

(c) to (e) Tea board provides financial assistance by way of loan, capital subsidy and interest subsidy on bank loans for